

sometimes happened, a fugitive rabble,—the mere wreck of a host, beaten and ruined by the bravery of some Old Testament hero. Succoth and Penuel are interesting places in the geography of Palestine from their connection with Gideon, but especially because they are associated with the life of Jacob. Here at Penuel the patriarch wrestled all night with a strange messenger, and at sunrise he passed on to meet his brother. Esau came from the south along this very road, and somewhere, not far from this spot, probably, was the scene of the famous meeting and reconciliation between them. It was at Succoth that Jacob rested for a season on his way to Canaan, after his injured father-in-law and brother had been appeased, and the offending one had by them been forgiven.

SELAH MERRILL.

### THE MOABITE POTTERY.

THE controversy on the genuineness of these collections has been carried on vigorously during the last quarter in the pages of the *Athenæum*. From the letters which have appeared we make, by permission of the Proprietors of the *Athenæum*, the following extracts, in the endeavour to present everything that is urged on either side as fairly as possible; but without the repetitions which have naturally found their way into the long letters written from either point of view.

#### I.—LETTER FROM MR. SHAPIRA.

The main arguments against the genuineness of the Moabite pottery are four, as follows:—

First, many false inscribed stones and squeezes of inscriptions had been forged in Jerusalem and Nablus, some of which came into my possession; why then should the pottery also not be forged, especially as Selim, my agent, is certainly a great rogue? For this reason I myself doubted the character of the pottery; hearing of thieves makes a man cautious, yet it does not follow every man he meets is a thief; but Prof. Koch has shown in his well-known pamphlet that the forgers of the stones could have had no hand in the pottery.

The principal forger of inscribed stones was Martin Bulus, who appears to have learned imperfectly the alphabet of the Mesa stone and some of the names found on that monument. He is an ingenious stone-cutter, but an ignorant man. In his forgeries the words Jehovah, Israel, Melek, Mesa, Moab, Chemosh, recur suspiciously, often with Abraham and all the patriarchs. In one case all the twelve tribes are named; in another, he brought me the squeeze of a large stone, with the words "the holy shekel" on it, in Hebrew, evidently from some coin; and in

another the inscription, AVSVSTVS HADPNVVS, by which he probably meant Augustus Hadrianus. On the other hand, I may remark that, in many hundred inscriptions which I have examined on the pottery, the words Mesa and Melek, Israel, Jehovah, and Abraham never occur, and Chemosh only twice; nor is there any evident attempt to make the inscriptions interesting to the casual reader of the letters.

Secondly, it was thought suspicious that nothing of the kind had been found before, and that the American exploring party found no specimens. I can only say to this that Dr. Almkvist and Baron Münchhausen have shown in their reports that the pottery was too carefully hidden to be found except by special excavation. The American party never went into Moab proper, and it is not likely that the Arabs would have shown the pottery to strangers accompanied by a Sheikh (Kablan) of the hostile tribe of the Adwan, considering that Mutluk would not even give a single piece to Mr. Shick, who went over with the Consul, though he was represented to have come over from me to build a water-mill which the Arabs had asked for.

Mutluk had found pottery about six years ago in digging for saltpetre, and, with a few companions, had sought for it since with great secrecy, in fear of his life. The Bedawin believe that the inscriptions are charms or directions for finding hidden treasure, and that to reveal where they are to be found should be punished by death.

Thirdly, the letters of M. Ganneau have raised an unfavourable feeling regarding the pottery. I will answer this objection shortly. M. Ganneau has never seen pottery made in Jerusalem like the Moabite; he only reports the hearsay evidence of a few wretched underlings, who contradicted themselves and one another, and were probably told by a servant or dragoman that they had better tell a tale likely to be acceptable. Attempts to get imitations from the Jerusalem potters only showed that they were unable to imitate the texture or art of the Moabite antiquities, and if Selim did attempt to forge any small objects he certainly did not succeed.

The attack made by Prof. Kautzsch is even less important (*Allge. Zeitung*, June, 1876). He begins by giving me a high character for honesty and uprightness, but argues that all my supporters rely on my critical judgment, whilst I myself did not confidently believe in the genuine character of the pottery, as I had refused to sell any more specimens till they had been proved not to be forgeries; but evidently it does not follow that because not *proved* genuine they were, therefore, in my opinion forgeries.

Again, this gentleman says he was told in Jerusalem (by Mr. Klein) that an Arab boy had told his informant that Selim had ordered pots to be made, and had engraved upon them the inscriptions after they were baked, which, he says, explains how all attempts failed to trace them to the potters, as they knew nothing of what happened after the pots left their hands. Now, not only does this theory not account for the jars with raised letters and the idols, but the professor has not even taken

the trouble to notice that the sunk inscriptions are not engraved after baking, but must have been made by impressing the clay when damp.

Still stranger is the proof of forgery which he gives, that a gentleman from Jerusalem had told him that he had heard from his Arab servant that an Arab merchant from Es Salt had said that he met a Bedawin passing over Jordan, and when he asked, "What have you got in your saddle-bag?" he answered, "Seventeen bits of pottery, which I am going to bury in the East for the Consuls to find," in which the professor recognises for certain the twelve inscribed pieces found by Pastor Weser and his party at Madeba. When the man who related this story was asked, he said it occurred in the summer of 1874. Thus we have a new natural phenomenon. The seventeen pieces buried in the summer of 1874 had increased in the course of two years *backwards* to the August of 1872, to twelve inscribed pieces and several hundred not inscribed found in Madeba, with forty-two at Diban, all the result of interring seventeen pieces only two years *later*!

Fourthly, the most important and substantial objection is on the palæographical grounds which have been relied on by English and French scholars: some letters supposed to belong to a later period are found with others thought to belong to an earlier one. Three letters especially have been suspected from their peculiar shape—namely, the *Mim*, the *Yod*, and the *Alpha*. This question is about to be treated in Schlottmann's large work soon to be published, and Prof. Koch has already partly answered the objection in his pamphlet.

I will only add that the three disputed letters are all found on the jar discovered by Dr. Almkvist, the genuine character of which cannot, of course, be disputed; and that these letters are consequently indisputably Moabitic.

But, finally, all that is said above only shows the objections to have no ground; but, as the idols and inscriptions are destined to form so important a new link in the obscure history of the habits and ritual of the nations surrounding Israel, it is only natural they should not be accepted unless positively proved genuine. I come, then, to the most important point. It has been proved by the greatest technical authorities in Europe, by Mr. Behme, the owner of the great pottery at Halle, and by one of the first technical authorities in Berlin on the subject, the Commerciennrath Marsch, that the jars and idols with raised letters on them require an artist of technical skill, as the letters are not stuck on, but the soft clay cut away round them to leave them standing out—a most difficult plastic work, and requiring that the jar should be kept wet for seven or eight days until moulded. Mr. Marsch thinks that with all their modern improvements it would be impossible to make such a jar for less than seventy marks (£3 10s.), and an idol would be yet more costly. This kind of work is, according to these gentlemen, entirely new, and they cannot explain why the Moabite potters should have done their work in so difficult a manner, unless, they say, the potters wished for that holy purpose to imitate the stone idol sculptors.

In any case the Jerusalem potters or any others in the country would

not know how to do such work ; and why should a forger choose so expensive a method, costing ten times what he would get for the jar ? My expenses in actual price of the antiquities are often very small, the principal cost being in travelling to fetch them. The objects were also proved to be of many different styles of workmanship, and of different kinds of clay, especially those of my third collection.

The above proof seems to show that the pottery is unquestionably genuine. See the Report of the above-mentioned gentlemen (No. 40 *Beilage der Aug. Allg. Zeitung*, 1877).

The jar found by Dr. Almkvist was also examined by these gentlemen, and was found in all respects similar to those in the Berlin collection.

The above proof refers only to the raised inscriptions ; fortunately some of the same jars have also impressed inscriptions made when the clay was moist, and nearly all the large idols have such double inscriptions raised in front and impressed behind. The impressed must consequently also be genuine. Other specimens which have only impressed inscriptions are found to resemble, in the peculiarities of different systems of writing from different localities, as well as in texture, those with the double inscriptions. These also are thus shown to be genuine.

## II.—FROM M. CLERMONT GANNEAU.

Paris, 4 *Décembre*, 1877.

Je viens de lire dans l'*Athenæum* la longue lettre de M. le baron de Münchhausen tendant à établir l'authenticité des poteries moabites. Comme mon nom s'y trouve incidemment mentionné, et qui, d'ailleurs, les conclusions de M. de Münchhausen visent incontestablement les idées que j'ai émises le premier sur cette question, et qui sont celles de la majorité des savants anglais, allemands et français, permettez-moi de répondre quelques mots—mais quelques mots seulement, car je considère, pour ma part, que c'est perdre son temps et sa peine que de revenir sans cesse sur cette affaire depuis longtemps jugée. D'autres travaux plus sérieux me réclament.

La majeure partie de la lettre de M. de Münchhausen est consacrée à exposer sa manière de voir d'après des faits déjà connus et discutés ; elle ne nous apprend de ce chef rien de neuf, et il serait oiseux de recommencer *da capo*, pour l'édification personnelle de M. de Münchhausen, tout ce fastidieux morceau. Je retiens seulement de cette première partie de la lettre une indication : c'est que M. de Münchhausen avait déjà son opinion faite sur l'authenticité quand il a entrepris son excursion au pays de Moab. Je crois d'ailleurs (si je ne m'abuse ou si ma mémoire ne me trahit) que c'est précisément sous M. de Münchhausen qu'a eu lieu en 1874 la grande enquête consulaire dirigée par M. Weser, enquête *absolument officielle*, comme je l'appris non sans quelque étonnement après avoir reçu de M. Weser l'assurance positive du contraire. M. de Münchhausen ne saurait donc se présenter, je ne dis pas comme un juge impartial, mais comme un arbitre neutre. Son siège était fait depuis longtemps quand il s'est rendu en Moab.

Je n'ai jamais prétendu qu'on ne trouverait en Moab aucun monu-

ment authentique; la stèle de Mésa serait là pour donner à une aussi absurde assertion le plus éclatant des démentis. J'ai seulement affirmé, et j'affirme encore, que les poteries moabites de Berlin sont apocryphes. M. de Munchhausen aurait donc parfaitement pu découvrir dans la grotte de Sheikh Mutlak des poteries dont je serai le premier à reconnaître la "genuineness" si elles sont "genuine"; j'aurais même été disposé, jusqu'à plus ample examen, à tenir ces poteries pour authentiques; mais si, comme l'affirme M. de Münchhausen, ces poteries sont identiques à celles de Berlin, je déclare *à priori*, que pour moi, elles sont fausses. Maintenant, M. de Münchhausen, dont le dire n'est point parole d'évangile en matière d'archéologie, peut se tromper dans son *criterium*—et c'est à souhaiter dans l'intérêt même de sa découverte.

Je ne saurais discuter ici les conditions dans lesquelles cette nouvelle trouvaille aurait été faite; j'attends sur ce point le rapport technique annoncé de M. Schick, pour l'autorité de qui je professe une grande estime scientifique; en tout cas la "kind of fine grey moss" qui recouvrait le sol de la caverne, et les "ruts worked by the passage of insects" (lesquels?) sont des arguments bien faibles pour en tirer avec M. de Münchhausen la preuve que "no human hand had touched it for long periods"; il suffit d'une saison pour que la mousse pousse, et de quelques heures pour que des "insects" (p. ex. de vulgaires lombrics) se frayent un chemin dans un sol précédemment remué.

M. de Münchhausen relate en passant que le Dr. Almkvist, accompagné de Selim, a fouillé une caverne de Moab choisie par lui seul, au hasard, et y a déterré une jarre avec inscription moabite. Si le Dr. Almkvist n'a réellement obéi à aucune suggestion, directe ou indirecte, de son compagnon éminemment suspect, s'il n'a pas été victime de ce tour de passe-passe, que nous appelons en français la *carte forcée*, on ne peut qu'admirer cette bonne fortune qui du premier coup, sur un point pris au hasard dans le pays de Moab, le fait tomber précisément sur une de ces jarres épigraphiques qu'il était allé y chercher! Je ne connais d'ailleurs ni la relation du Dr. Almkvist, ni le monument qu'il a rapporté; je m'abstiens donc de tout autre commentaire, mais je réclame le droit de rester, jusqu'à nouvel ordre, dans mon scepticisme.

Je me permettrai, en terminant, de demander à M. de Münchhausen pourquoi le Museum de Berlin n'a pas cru devoir acquérir les suites de la collection si intéressante de M. Shapira, pourquoi l'on a renoncé à exposer et à publier les monuments déjà acquis. Si les arguments de M. de Münchhausen possèdent réellement la valeur qu'il leur prête, il semble que le premier effet qu'ils doivent avoir c'est de convaincre ses propres compatriotes.

### III.—FROM M. CLERMONT GANNEAU.

Paris, 16 Décembre, 1877.

Je viens de lire l'article de M. Shapira dans le nombre de l'*Athenæum* du 15 courant. Ce long plaidoyer *pro domo sua*, fruit naturel et attendu

de la lettre de M. de Münchhausen, ne contient aucun élément nouveau d'information pour ceux qui sont au courant de la question.

M. Shapira affecte de faire porter le débat sur des points qui sont hors de conteste, et qui lui offrent l'occasion de triompher à peu de frais d'objections imaginaires. Il néglige en revanche de répondre aux arguments les plus directs et les plus catégoriques. Ainsi, par exemple, je n'ai jamais, pour ma part, attribué la fabrication des poteries moabites au lapicide Martin Boulos; je sais, je savais et j'ai publié, bien avant que M. Shapira ne le sût et ne le publiât, ce dont ce concurrent de Selim était capable; Martin Boulos a fait, en effet, ses premières armes sur la stèle du Temple que j'avais découverte et qu'il avait travaillé, pour mon compte, à dégager du mur où elle était encastrée.

Les essais infructueux tentés pour faire fabriquer à certains potiers de Jérusalem des poteries analogues à celles de M. Shapira, ne sont pas de mon fait; je n'ai jamais eu recours à ce moyen puéril qui devait nécessairement échouer, parceque ceux qui ont eu la naïveté d'y recourir; ne s'adressaient pas aux véritables fabricants, eu s'adressant aux potiers arabes.

M. Shapira crie victoire parcequ'il croit devoir tirer des trouvailles de MM. Almkvist et de Münchhausen la preuve qu'il est possible de découvrir dans le pays de Moab des monuments épigraphiques authentiques; mais—qu'il me permette de le lui dire—c'est encore ce qu'on appelle enfoncer une porte ouverte: cette possibilité n'a jamais été mise en doute, et il est plus que superflu de l'établir. Les trouvailles de MM. Almkvist et de Münchhausen, fussent-elles à l'abri de tout soupçon—et nous avons vu qu'il était loin d'en être ainsi—ne prouveraient absolument rien pour l'authenticité des séries actuellement à Berlin ou entre les mains de M. Shapira.

En effet, ou les objets recueillis par MM. Almkvist et de Münchhausen ne ressemblent pas aux poteries contestées, et alors ils ne peuvent être invoqués en leur faveur; ou bien, au contraire, ils leur ressemblent, et alors ils tombent sous le coup des graves accusations dont leurs sœurs n'ont encore pu se faire décharger par aucun tribunal sérieux. Ces objets, déterrés par MM. Almkvist et de Münchhausen, soit en compagnie de Selim, soit dans une caverne de Cheykh Mutlak (l'un des ex-comparses de Selim), appartiennent par leur aspect—d'après ce que nous apprennent ces messieurs eux-mêmes—à cette famille plus que suspecte. Tant pis pour ces objets! Ils partageront le sort commun.

En un mot M. Shapira raisonne à peu près ainsi:

“ Les premières poteries sont les congénères des nouvelles poteries; or les nouvelles sont authentiques (?), donc les premières sont également authentiques.

On me laissera libre, j'espère, de retourner ce raisonnement arbitraire et de dire:

Les nouvelles poteries sont les congénères des premières poteries; or les premières sont apocryphes, donc les nouvelles sont également apocryphes.

C'est un peu la fameuse histoire du prisonnier :

“ Mon capitaine ! j'ai fait un prisonnier !—Eh ! bien, amène-le !—Je ne peux pas ! il m'emmène ! ”

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IV.—FROM MAJOR WILSON, R.E.

December, 1877.

I have hitherto taken no part in the discussion as to the genuineness or otherwise of the so-called Moabite pottery, nor do I wish to do so now, but the letter of Freiherr von Münchhausen, in your issue of the 1st inst., which I have only just seen, seems to call for some remark. The letter is avowedly written for publication, and, as it were, officially recognises the genuineness of the pottery. There are, however, two or three points which have never been satisfactorily cleared up, and I still hesitate to believe in the pottery. No inscribed pottery, or images of any kind, that I am aware of, were found in Moab before the discovery of the Moabite stone, of which Selim is known to have made a copy, opened up visions of untold wealth to the hungry eyes of the Bedawin sheikhs. The visits of Messrs. Shapira, Weser, and Münchhausen to Moab have been hurriedly made for the purpose of digging up pottery, or proving that pottery could be dug up. On the other hand, Prof. Palmer and Mr. Drake heard of no pottery during their stay in Moab, and the members of the expeditions sent by the American Palestine Society, who passed not days but weeks in Moab, have been similarly unfortunate. Is it likely that the scientific officers of the American expeditions, in daily communication with the Bedawin, would have allowed articles of such extreme interest, if genuine, to have been unearthed only by gentlemen from Jerusalem ?

In one respect Fr. von Münchhausen's letter is likely to create a false impression as to the conclusions arrived at by the late Mr. Drake. Mr. Drake, it is true, at first believed, though doubtfully, in the genuineness of the pottery, but he was at last quite convinced that the greater number of the pieces, including all those with inscriptions, were forgeries. (See *Quarterly Statement of P. E. F.*, April, 1874, p. 119.)

I may add, that after carefully reading the German Consul-General's letter, I can quite conceive that he was deceived by the Bedawin.

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V.—FROM THE “ATHENÆUM.”

The latest event in the history of the “ Moabite ” pottery is the arrival in England of two idols recently brought home by Lieut. Kitchener. These were procured in Jerusalem, and their manufacture has been traced by Lieut. Kitchener to the renowned Selim el Kari. He has also ascertained that similar pottery may be obtained at a low price from the same source. The two specimens have been seen by Baron Münchhausen and others in Jerusalem, and are regarded as identical with the idols of the Shapira collection. One of them is a truncated figure in hollow pottery,

the front of which is covered with the familiar letters, not inscribed, but in relief; the neck is decorated with the constantly recurring seven dots, and the back is adorned with inscribed letters. The second is a hollow, circular tube, with a face. The front has the letters in relief, and the back inscribed letters. The faces resemble those of the drawings and photographs already sent home of the Shapira collection. As Mr. Shapira has very kindly offered to lend to the Committee of the Palestine Fund a small collection of his pottery, comparison will shortly be possible. Meantime Lieut. Kitchener's idols remain for the present at the office of the Fund. Any definite conclusion, from these specimens alone, as to the worthlessness of the whole would be at present premature, but it may be useful to point out that, as the case at present stands, the following facts are indisputable: (1) Two independent investigators, Messrs. Ganneau and Drake, working in ignorance of each other's movements, arrived almost simultaneously at the discovery that Selim el Kari was engaged in manufacturing sham antique pottery, and (2) Lieut. Kitchener has traced the production of his two idols to the same workshop.

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#### VI.—FROM MR. SHAPIRA.

Jerusalem, *Jan. 11, 1878.*

It is with great satisfaction and pleasure that I announce to you that, after several years of vague rumours about Selim having fabricated "Moabitea," some specimens of his manufacture have, during my recent absence, been at last discovered. An investigation in reference to those forgeries was at once instituted by the Freiherr von Münchhausen, the Imperial German Consul for Palestine, who communicated to me a statement of the results hitherto obtained, which I would ask you to insert in your valuable paper, for the benefit of all who desire to arrive at the truth concerning the Moabite pottery.

The statement of the Freiherr von Münchhausen was accompanied by a note in German, of which I give the English translation:—

"Jerusalem, *Jan. 9, 1878.*

"Enclosed I hand you the English translation of a truthful description of an investigation concerning traces of Moabitic forgeries which I instituted during your absence, my attention having been drawn to the subject by Lieut. Kitchener's purchases. Let me add that, although Selim has, in the meantime, escaped to Alexandria, I have not failed to follow up the traces, and hope soon to be in a position to communicate to you further results.

(Signed) "MUNCHHAUSEN."

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Lieut. Kitchener, the chief of the last expedition sent out by the Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund, showed me, a few days before his leaving for England in December last, some Moabitic clay idols,

bearing inscriptions, which had been secretly and in strict confidence shown to him, and which he had subsequently purchased. He could not, therefore, tell me the name of the person from whom he had bought them, but stated that not only had that person declared these idols to be forgeries, but that he had also expressed his readiness to lead him, Mr. Kitchener, to the house where the Moabitic antiquities were made, and especially that he would show him there a similar idol, made of clay, but *not yet fired*, or burnt. When I asked Mr. Kitchener, just before he left, about the results of his investigation, he told me that though he had actually had the house pointed out to him which was said to contain the unburnt idol as well as the whole factory of Moabitic antiquities, he had been unable, notwithstanding repeated efforts, to gain admission there.

The day after Mr. Kitchener had left, I discovered his informant, and the next day the house which had been pointed out to him. The former is a certain Kattan, a seemingly honest young Arab tradesman: the house is no other than that of Selim el Kary, whose name is sufficiently notorious in this controversy. Having at once procured a warrant from the Turkish police, I caused the house to be searched in the presence of one of the agents of the consulate, when the following articles were found:—1. A newly made unburnt clay idol, in a sitting posture, and more than a foot in height; 2. Four small iron chisels, which had clearly been used in the manufacture of this figure. No other pottery wares were found, nor any tools, except those mentioned, and no oven capable of being used for firing was to be seen in the whole house. These articles were confiscated by the police, and courteously placed at my disposal by the governor. The inscription on the idol's breast differs essentially in character from those of Mr. Shapira's antiquities: the letters, too, are very much smaller. They have been neatly enough inscribed—no doubt with the confiscated chisels—but they differ considerably from the usual alphabet. Besides, a number of fantastic marks are interspersed here and there among genuine letters. The figure itself is hollowed out a little at the base, but is otherwise massive and solid, and consequently very heavy, whereas the articles in Mr. Shapira's collection are mostly quite hollow and light.

When I examined Kattan and Selim el Kary at my office, I found them to agree in this, that they both stated that Selim had sold five Moabitic clay figures to Kattan, and that the latter had sold two of them to Mr. Kitchener. But with regard to the main point, viz., the origin of these articles, they contradicted each other. While Kattan asserted that Selim had declared them to be his own manufacture, Selim said, as he has often said before, that he had never imitated any Moabitic pottery at all, but that the five clay figures in question were part of a collection which had been offered two years ago to Mr. Shapira by a Bedouin, that Mr. Shapira had at that time declined purchasing them, and that he, Selim, had then bought them very cheaply. When I questioned him about the unburnt idol, he replied that he had received it from the well-

known antique forger, Martin Boulos, as also the four chisels, the latter for the purpose of closing up certain cracks and crevices in the clay. He further said that Martin Boulos had held out brilliant prospects to him which they might realise together if such forged articles could be sold. It is remarkable that Selim, in his declaration (upon which, since lying has become his second nature, no reliance whatever can be placed), always wished to give the impression that he *could* tell much more, but that *he would only do so in Mr. Shapira's presence*. This probably supplies the key to the whole business.

When, through the publication of Messrs. Socin and Kautzsch's pamphlet, the market value of the Moabitic antiquities had considerably fallen, Selim was dismissed by Mr. Shapira, who till then had kept him in his employment, and he was reduced to great poverty. A short time before Mr. Shapira left for Europe, Selim presented a petition here, in which he claimed wages due to him by his late employer; whereas, according to two bills in Mr. Shapira's possession, *he* proved to be the creditor, and not Selim. As the latter, however, would not yield, but persisted in his claims, I referred him to the competent Turkish authorities. There, of course, on the production of the bills by Mr. Shapira, Selim's claims were rejected; and on that occasion he told several persons, so that I came to hear of it, that if Mr. Shapira did not satisfy his demands to the last farthing he would "expose the whole of the Moabitic antiquities."

Even if, as above mentioned, the two idols acquired by Mr. Kitchener are suspected to be imitations, such is not the case with the other three clay idols which Kattan bought from Selim, and which he has since shown to me. To judge by their colour they seem to be very old, and in the deeply and elaborately engraved letters, all belonging to the well-known Moabitic alphabet, is found a quantity of hard, ancient-looking earth, firmly adhering to the clay. Some persons entirely unbiassed in this controversy, and experienced in judging of the age of pottery wares, to whom I showed the idols, declared them to be genuine, or at all events extremely old. The idea of these articles, as well as of those of the former collection, being imitations or forgeries is improbable, for many and frequently stated reasons, and yet it is not impossible that the idols in Mr. Kitchener's possession may be imitations, since even Mr. Shapira declares that he has one non-genuine clay figure. Mr. Koch's investigations in the year 1875 have proved it impossible for these articles to have been fabricated here in any *great quantity*, and yet the factory where they were fabricated to have remained undiscovered all this time. But, even granting such a possibility, the great and very genuine poverty of Selim seems sufficient proof that he could not have taken part in the wholesale profitable manufacture of unguenuine "Moabitica." He must, in such a case, at least have earned enough to save him from the utter poverty into which he has now fallen. The most probable explanation of his conduct, and of the circumstances under which the confiscated articles came into his possession, seems to be simply

that he attempted to extort money from Mr. Shapira. Thus his way of selling them to Kattan shows his wish to excite curiosity by an affected mysteriousness of demeanour, and my agent informed me that Selim's conduct during the search in his house could not but make him suspect that he actually wished for it, and was glad that it took place. And if, besides, his absurd statement when examined by me is taken into consideration—viz., that he could only tell the whole truth in Mr. Shapira's presence, the conviction is almost forced on one that he procured the unburnt idol and the four chisels, and cautiously directed public attention to them, in order to compromise Mr. Shapira, and thereby perhaps manage to extort something from him for himself, or simply by way of revenge. However, I shall not content myself with this impression, but shall continue my investigations, and hope to obtain some definite and final results.

BARON MUNCHHAUSEN.

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By Freiherr von Münchhausen's kindness I have been allowed to take a photograph of the unbaked idol mentioned in his statement. In sending you a copy of the same, together with a photograph of genuine pottery, taken, some three years ago, by Lieut. Kitchener, I hope that the publication of the two woodcuts, side by side, will enable your readers to arrive at an accurate idea on the subject.

M. W. SHAPIRA.

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#### VII.—FROM THE REV. W. HAYES WARD.

New York, Dec. 31, 1877.

It may be interesting, in connexion with Mr. Shapira's late communications to the *Athenæum*, to tell the reasons why some in America have been so slow to accept his wares as genuine.

About six years ago, before the first collection of his wares was purchased by the German Government, through the kindness of the Rev. D. Stuart Dodge, of Beirut, a collection of squeezes of "Moabite" inscriptions, and drawings of pottery and idols with their inscriptions, including a fair share of the coarse and obscene figures, was obtained from Mr. Shapira, and sent to New York to be examined by the directors of the American Palestine Exploration Society, with a view to a purchase. A number of these copies are before me as I write.

These inscriptions and figures were carefully examined, among others by Mr. Addison van Name, Librarian of Yale College, Prof. Isaac H. Hall, and myself, and our judgment was decidedly averse to their genuineness, although they came endorsed by Mr. Shapira's signature.

We found that it was utterly impossible to put them into words of a Semitic character. This was not through any lack of legibility, nor because the inscriptions were not of sufficient length. There is absolutely no reason to expect anything but inscriptions in a Semitic language from that region; but it was not in any way possible to reduce them to sense.

Then, again, the shape of the characters sufficiently proved that they were forgeries. There are, in the Phœnician alphabet, certain letters which, as every epigraphist knows, belong to the same class, so far as their construction is concerned, and which change their shape together. Such letters are *daleth* and *resh*; and such are *mem*, *nun*, and *shin*. To see *daleth* as a triangle and *resh* rounded was enough to prove the forgery. So it was absurd to find *mem* written in the later form, with the strokes at right angles, while *shin* was written in its oldest style, like our English W.

I may add that it was also startling to find, on the same squeeze, two long inscriptions, in two different alphabets, that could not have co-existed by less than five hundred years, one of these being Phœnician of the composite character above described, while the other was apparently made by random strokes, so as to produce the general effect of Nabathean.

Other evidence even more startling was not wanting. Of two of the longest inscriptions squeezes were sent. I noticed on the brown paper, over considerable portions, a light, whitish cloud, which appeared to me to suggest lime. It occurred to me, especially as the impressions of the letters and other marks seemed to agree therewith, that instead of being taken from black basalt at Um-el-Rasas and Aroer, they had been taken from a bed of mortar, impressed when wet with the inscription. This led to a more careful examination of the paper, when there were found adhering to it quite a number of hard white particles, which on analysis proved to be carbonate of lime, and which were just such as might have been detached from the bed of inscribed mortar, from which I have no doubt the squeezes were taken. This was confirmed by evident slips of the stick with which the letters were traced, so that the lines crossed each other at the apex of angles.

Not less surprising was the character of the border of the inscription. In one case the squeeze showed a border around the inscription of large dots, and in another of short diagonal lines, thus suggesting that the idea was taken by some ignorant forger from some plate in which the engraver had thus represented the edge of the stone.

The Palestine Exploration Society was advised not to purchase Mr. Shapira's collection, which was afterwards secured, much to our surprise, by the German Government.

WILLIAM HAYES WARD.

P.S.—Mr. Shapira says that "the American party never went into Moab proper." The American party, in 1873, made its camp in Heshbon, a Moabitic city, and were there all summer, and made excursions into all parts of the country north of the Arnon, including all the places from which Mr. Shapira's pottery was *at that time* said to have come, including Heshbon, El-'Al, Mahsub, Madeba, and Main. There was then no difficulty about hostile tribes, and the range of the Adwan extended as far as the Zarga Main, south of Madeba, without hostility. A son of Kablan, who acted at times as guide of the American party,

confidentially yet repeatedly told them that none of the antiquities in the possession of "the gentleman of Jerusalem," meaning Mr. Shapira, came from the east of the Jordan. Further, one Rev. Bahnam Hassûni, formerly pastor of the Protestant Church at Es-Salt, informed them that at the beginning of his career Selim endeavoured to induce him to enter upon this work of forging and palming off antiquities from Moab.

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VIII.—FROM M. CLERMONT GANNEAU.

Paris, Rue de Vaugirard 60, *Février*, 1878.

1° La première fois que j'eus occasion d'examiner des reproductions de poteries moabites (à Londres, vers 1872) je n'hésitai pas à déclarer que, pour moi, ces poteries étaient fausses, et que j'y croyais reconnaître la main d'un Arabe chrétien nommé Selim.

2° Plus tard, pendant ma mission à Jérusalem (1873—74), j'acquis et publiai les preuves matérielles de ce qui n'était jusqu'alors qu'une présomption : je surpris le faussaire la main dans le sac, et se faussaire c'était le dit Selim—et de deux.

3° D'un autre côté, M. Drake, qui ne peut être soupçonné d'avoir obéi à des idées préconçues, attendu qu'il a cru, au début, à l'authenticité des poteries, arrivait au même résultat et rencontra, comme moi, au fond de l'affaire un nom, celui de Selim—et de trois.

4° Il ne manquait plus, pour achever de convaincre les plus incrédules, que l'aveu même du mystificateur ; cet aveu nous l'avons aujourd'hui, grâce au Lieutenant Kitchener, et celui qui le fait c'est Selim—et de quatre !

La piquante découverte de M. Kitchener me fait un devoir de livrer à la publicité un curieux document que j'ai conservé par devers moi pendant plusieurs mois : c'est une lettre autographe de Selim, écrite en grec moderne fort incorrect, et à moi adressée au mois d'Août, 1877. J'y joins une traduction littérale que je dois à l'obligeance d'un de mes amis d'ici.

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*A Monsieur Ganneau.*

De Jérusalem, *Mois de Août*, 6.\*

D'abord je te demande des nouvelles de ta santé et ensuite je te dirai que quand . . . les antiquités avec Khavadja Sapira, il me parla et me dit : "Je te donnerai beaucoup d'argent pourvu seulement que tu ne parles pas des choses secrètes relatives à la provenance des choses." Je m'en suis beaucoup occupé et à cette heure il me traite en ennemi parce que quand nos gardes s'en allèrent il me dit que je paie les hommes qui avaient mal parlé de nous, et moi, tout ainsi qu'il me l'avait dit, j'ai payé, d'ai voulu rentrer dans ces dépenses alors il me dit : "Maintenant je ne te crains plus parce que le roi le sait bien que ce sont des mensonges, il m'a payé ; toi et Ganneau (il sait) que vous voulez me nuire."

Pour moi je veux le perdre comme il m'a perdu, car je connais toute

\* Vieux style.

† Ici un mot douteux.

son affaire. Si tu veux que je vienne près de toi afin que je te dise tout et que tu le publies dans les journaux et qu'ainsi je dévoile tous ses mensonges, si tu le veux, écris à un de tes amis qu'il m'avance les fonds pour que je vienne près de toi et t'explique tout clairement, si tu veux que je sois présent pour rendre manifestes les mensonges depuis le commencement jusqu'à la fin. Ton serviteur,

SALIM KARI.

La suscription seule est en arabe. La lettre m'est arrivée par l'intermédiaire d'un de mes amis de Jérusalem que Selim était venu trouver et à qu'il a débité une foule de choses que je m'abstiens de répéter. Je décline naturellement toute espèce de responsabilité pour cette lettre, dont je n'entends endosser en rien les assertions.

Je suis payé pour savoir la créance que méritent les dires de maître Selim, mon ex-accusateur, devenu spontanément mon correspondant. Connaissant le pèlerin, je n'avais pas attaché à cette missive, embrouillée et paraissant dictée par un sentiment de vengeance, plus d'importance qu'elle n'en comportait. Je me demandais même par instants, je l'avoue, si cette démarche bizarre ne cachait pas un piège dressé contre moi, et si Selim ne jouait pas au Zopyre. Je mis donc la lettre de côté, sans y répondre bien entendu, et j'attendis les événements: l'événement est venu sous la forme des statuettes achetées par M. Kitchener.

Libre aux derniers partisans de l'authenticité de refuser de se rendre à l'évidence; ce n'est certes pas moi qui entreprendrai la conversion de pécheurs aussi endurcis. Après tout, il leur reste toujours la ressource d'expliquer l'inexplicable volte-face de Selim par une influence occulte, d'y voir même le résultat d'un plan machiavélique. N'est-ce pas moi qui ai offert autrefois à Selim, dans la rue des Chrétiens, je ne sais plus quelle somme fabuleuse pour acheter son faux témoignage contre M. Shapira? Aujourd'hui c'est Selim qui m'a fait des avances pour "perdre" le dit M. Shapira!

#### IX.—FROM DR. NEUBAUER.

Bodleian Library, Feb. 15, 1878.

During my last visit to Berlin, in December, although very busy with the more particular object of my journey, I could not help devoting a day to visiting the famous Moabitic collection of pottery; permission having been most courteously granted me by the authorities in the Ministry of Public Instruction, where this collection is preserved in a room by itself, and not in the Museum, as is wrongly stated by Prof. Socin and M. Clermont Ganneau. It must be said, to the honour of the authorities of the Museum, that they never thought of accepting it for their establishment.

As I have already stated in your columns, I was perfectly persuaded, from the specimens published by Prof. Schlottmann, in the Journal of the German Oriental Society, that the pottery and idols are forgeries,

and I was confirmed in my belief by the elaborate book of Prof. Kautzsch, published in 1876, after a personal examination of the Berlin collection as well as those at Stuttgart and Basle. Still I thought I might find one or more pieces in the collection which would make the impression of being genuine, and justify Prof. Schlottmann's belief. I must say, however, that I have never seen such a heap of ugly objects altogether as in this collection, and I was quite astonished that a man of learning and common sense should not have seen in them at once the rudest forgeries possible. I shall not insist again upon the palæographical evidence of their spuriousness, nor on the fact that not a single Semitic word can be read in any of them, this having been made clear over and over again. Prof. Schlottmann, however, thinks he is able to explain the variety of forms assumed by one and the same letter in the same line, and Dr. Koch still believes the language might be some unknown one, although we know from the Mesha inscription what the Moabite language was like.

It has already been stated by Prof. Kautzsch that the shape of one of the gods has a resemblance to Napoleon the Third, wearing a *chapeau de gendarme*, and by myself that the goddess of the earth looks like a German girl; and now I find from personal inspection that one of the idols (that near the window at Berlin) is a copy of a Christ in the Greek churches, and that, too, executed in the rudest way possible.

Prof. Schlottmann says that these ugly figures are meant in the Old Testament by the word  $\text{זִבּוּשׁ}$ , which I deny. The word means "abomination," and is applied to all idols in general, and even the Venus of Milo would not have had another denomination. The Prophets from first to last speak of idols of gold, silver, and other metals, of stone and wood, but never of those of clay. Would, for instance, the passages in Isaiah xli. 19, 20, Jeremiah ii. 28, Psalms cxv. 4 to 8, not have been the place to make allusion to such fragile idols? The only mention of idols formed by potters is to be found in the apocryphal book, Wisdom of Solomon, xv. 8, which refers probably to the Greek period in Palestine. How is it to be explained that in a place where so many idols and vases have been found not a single one in wood and metal occurs, as the Old Testament would lead us to expect? What are those heaps of smaller and larger tablets, or *tesserae*, in the collection of Berlin if not a forgery by a person who knew of the existence of such objects in old times? How comes the vase near the door of the collection to be ornamented with four Maltese crosses? The forgery is evident, and is confirmed now by the discovery of Lieut. Kitchener.

AD. NEUBAUER.

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The correspondence has for the present closed with a letter from Mr. Shapira, in which he analyses the letters on the inscribed jars, and one from the Baron Von Münchhausen, which called forth two notes from Lieut. Conder and M. Ganneau. It contains, however, no new fact likely to be of service to those who take interest in this discussion.